

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5-11, 13, 15, 16, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Allen (US 2,278,040).

Claims 2, 4, 12, 14, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Allen in view of Ortolano (US 4,386,887).

Claims 1-18 remain active in this application.

Independent claims 1, 6, and 15 have been amended herein.

APPLICANT'S ARGUMENTS

The instant invention prevents blade vibrations in a fluid-flow machine having a row or rows of moving blades.

With respect to the 35 U.S.C. 102(b) rejections of claims 1, 3, 5-11, 13, 15, 16, and 18, applicant has amended independent claims 1, 6, and 15 to include, in relevant part, the blade shroud(s) having a saw-tooth-shaped contact region such that adjacent blade shrouds are attached one inside the other thereby restricting blade movement about a center of axis of rotation. Support for this amendment is found in the instant application's Specification at paragraph [0022] and Figures 2 and 3. The saw-tooth-shaped contact between the shroud plates inhibits the rotation of the blades where the saw-tooth shape geometry creates an abutment stemming from each of the shroud plates.

In contrast, the shroud element 8 of the Examiner cited reference Allen is composed of two parts which are shaped by a stamping operation, tack welded together, and tack welded to the blade tips, see page 2, right side column, lines 20-28, and 45-59. The two-part shroud elements of each blade are further welded to the adjacent shroud elements to form a unitary shroud structure, see page 3, left side column, lines 38-52. Allen does not teach inhibiting the rotation of the blades about a center axis of rotation by using adjacent abutments in the shrouds.

Where Allen teaches tack welding adjacent shroud elements together to form a unitary shroud structure, Allen fails to anticipate the saw-tooth-shaped contact region on the shroud

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plates of the instant invention which allows the blade shrouds to be attached one inside the other thereby restricting blade movement about a center of axis of rotation.

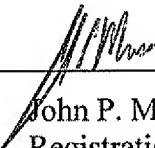
With respect to the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejections of claims 2, 4, 12, 14, and 17, these claims depend from the above amended independent claims and therefore the above arguments are also applicable to these claims.

Conclusion

The claims have been amended and reconsideration and allowance in light of the amendments and remarks herein is respectfully requested. The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper, including the fees specified in 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 (c), 1.17(a)(1) and 1.20(d), or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

Respectfully submitted,

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